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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

**In re U.S. Patent Application
Dirk COSTROP et al.**

Examiner: Unassigned

Group Art Unit: Unassigned

International Serial Number: PCT/BE2004/000168

International Filing Date: November 29, 2004 Atty. Docket: COST3002/JEK

**For: DEVICE AND METHOD TO FEED AND ALIGN A WEB WITH INCREASED
WEB STABILITY FOR PRINTING**

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT BEFORE EXAMINATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

This paper accompanies documents submitted to initiate national stage processing of the above-identified international patent application.

The claims of the international application were amended during international preliminary examination and the amendments were annexed to the International Preliminary Examination Report for the international application.

Before calculating the filing fee and before formal examination of the application on the merits, it is desired to amend the application in accordance with the following particulars.

AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

An abstract is provided as shown on a separate page of this paper under the heading "AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT".

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as annexed to the IPER in accordance with the following LIST OF CURRENT CLAIMS, which indicates the status of all the claims in the application and all amendments to the claims. The list of claims is intended to show the status of all claims pending in the application, including any amendments

thereto.

The amendments to the claims of this application, which originated in a foreign country, are submitted before examination on the merits and are not intended to have a narrowing effect for the purpose of patentability, but rather are made for one or more of the following reasons: (i) to remove drawing reference numerals unnecessary under U.S. practice; (ii) to remove or reduce multiple dependent claims to reduce the filing fee; (iii) to revise the original language originating in a foreign country to better conform to customary English usage and style for U.S. patent claiming; (iv) to revise original non-U.S. claim terminology into more appropriate English claim terms having a scope of meaning consistent with the original intended language in preparation for U.S. examination; (iv) to remove limitations having an effect in a foreign country which is different and unintended under U.S. practice (i.e., changing "consisting of" to "comprising"); (v) to remove or amend original claim language that could be regarded as alternative expressions that are acceptable under foreign patent practice but possibly subject to objection under U.S. practice, typically having a broadening or neutral effect in the amended claim; and/or (vi) to improve the clarity or meaning of the original language.

In the case of amendments effectively changing an original claim element expressed as a "means plus function" that could raise a presumption of claim expression under 35 U.S.C. 112, 6th paragraph to a structural expression or to an expression removing the presumption of a "means-plus-function" statement, it is not intended to narrow the claim so amended for purposes of patentability, but rather to place the claim in a form considered to be intended by the applicant from a foreign country where claim limitations described in terms of means-plus-function do not have the same effect as under U.S. practice. Thus, such amendments are intended to establish a full range of equivalents to the claim elements so amended under the U.S. doctrine of equivalents and beyond the range associated with "means-plus-function" expressions according to 35 U.S.C. 112, 6th paragraph, just as if the claim so amended was presented originally in its amended form.

All rights are reserved to the original disclosed and claimed subject matter and any cancellation of claims is made without prejudice or disclaimer.